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# The Flyleaf

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Friends of Fondren Library Vol. 43, No. 4

Summer 1993

993



H. Malcolm Lovett and his granddaughter Helen Randall



## A LETTER TO THE FRIENDS

Dear Friends,

I am very proud to report that the Friends of Fondren Library has had an extremely successful year. My deepest thanks to each of you and to our hardworking board for the support given the many projects and events sponsored by the Friends this year to raise much-needed money for the library. Our efforts have enriched the endowment and contributed books and other learning materials to the shelves of Fondren. It was indeed a hallmark year.

First, I am pleased to announce that the Thirteenth Annual Fondren Saturday Night Gala raised for the library endowment fund approximately \$93,000, the largest amount in our 40-year history. That success was followed by the Book Sale, which returned revenues of \$4,400. Applause goes to the chairmen of these events: Susan Merriman, Karen Rogers, Joan Ryan, and Roxanne Shaw.

Funds from memberships brought \$18,100 to the library through the contemporary literature, audio-visual, and librarian's funds, and we thank Ron Blake and Herman Schultz for their efforts to increase our enrollment.

Once again, the special programs offered to members of the Friends of Fondren were outstanding, thanks to the talents of Charles Maynard. This year we benefitted from lectures by Gail Stokes, professor of history, and Ewa

Thompson, professor of German and Slavic studies. At Homecoming, we honored a Rice graduate and Houston businessman, Walter Baker, a former president of the Friends.

A Rice author, David Westheimer, drew an attentive audience for a discussion of his new book, *Sitting It Out*, and another authors' reception celebrated the newly published works of a number of Houston and Rice writers. The Schubertiad, always a popular event, was co-sponsored with the Shepherd Society. The Gala, our most successful ever, honored a special son of Rice, H. Malcolm Lovett, who enlivened the program with his witty reminiscences. We closed out the year with a fascinating talk on the lives of pioneer women in Texas given by Jo Ella Exley, a member of the Friends.

I am stepping down as president this year after two wonderful years of service to this very special group. I want to thank you for all your support — both to me personally and to the Friends of Fondren. Book lovers make wonderful friends.

Sincerely,

*Elaine J. Davis*

ELAINE ILLIG DAVIS  
President, Friends of Fondren Library

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### RICE UNIVERSITY'S FONDREN LIBRARY

Founded under the charter of the university dated May 18, 1891, the library was established in 1913. Its present building was dedicated November 4, 1949, and rededicated in 1969 after a substantial addition, both made possible by gifts of Ella F. Fondren, her children, and the Fondren Foundation and Trust as a tribute to Walter William Fondren. The library celebrated its half-millionth volume in 1965 and its one-millionth volume on April 22, 1979.

### THE FRIENDS OF FONDREN LIBRARY

The Friends of Fondren Library was founded in 1950 as an association of library supporters interested in increasing and making better known the resources of Fondren Library at Rice University. The Friends, through members' contributions and sponsorship of a program of memorials and honor gifts, secure gifts and bequests, and provide funds for the purchase of rare books, manuscripts, and other materials that are needed to support teaching and research at the university.

### THE FLYLEAF

Founded October 1950 and published quarterly by the Friends of Fondren Library, Rice University, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas 77251-1892. *The Flyleaf* is a record of Fondren Library's and Friends' activities, and of the generosity of the library's supporters.



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Cover photo by Rachel Decker

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Photos by Rachel Decker and William Pannill

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## Lovett honored at Fondren Saturday Night

by Joan Ryan

**O**n a rainy April evening, a crowd of dedicated friends of Fondren Library and fans of H. Malcolm Lovett braved the storm and filled Cohen House to capacity to celebrate his dedicated service to Rice University throughout his lifetime. Surrounded by his children, grandchildren, and an admiring group of friends, Mr. Lovett regaled his audience with witty reminiscences of a university he has been closely associated with since he was seven years old.

"I've spent many years watching the growth of Fondren Library," Mr. Lovett recalled. "It is a major resource for this wonderful university, and, as most of you know, Rice has been a major source of pleasure for me for 84 years — now that I've reached my 92nd birthday. I'm planning to be here to help you celebrate Fondren Library in eight years, when I'm 100."

"Of course, in the beginning we didn't have a real library," he said. "Each course had a group of books set aside, and there was a central collection of books in the north side of what is now Lovett Hall. Finally, Rice approached the Fondren family who had already given a library to SMU in Dallas. And they didn't hesitate a moment to give us one when we asked for it. I hope all of you think as much of Rice and Fondren as us old fogies do."

One of the highlights of the evening was a film put together by Karen Hess Rogers, a member of the Friends Board. The videotape featured a recently filmed interview of Mr. Lovett by the Rice historian John Boles, archival photographs, and remembrances by some of Mr. Lovett's colleagues.

In the tape, Mr. Lovett recalled his first impressions of Rice and the new adventure that awaited his family in Houston. He was six years old when his father, a mathematics professor at Princeton University, accepted the challenge of designing and presiding over the new Texas institute, hiring its first faculty,

and assembling its first students. "I was just learning how to ice skate on a new pond in Princeton," Mr. Lovett recalled. "And I told my friends that next year I'd be skating on the Gulf of Mexico. Actually, I was glad we weren't moving to South Africa where my father had been offered a position as head of a new astronomy laboratory."

"When my family arrived in Houston, one of the first things we did was to hire a Pierce-Arrow car and motor out Main Street to view the land where the new college would be built. South Main Street was a high-crowned road laid with crushed white oyster shell, with deep water-filled ditches on either side. The road ended where the main gates to the campus are now, and, when we reached that point, what we saw was a sea of water, as far as the eye could see."

According to C. M. Hank Hudspeth, a Rice Board colleague of Mr. Lovett's who appears in the film, "Malcolm Lovett has the most remarkable memory of anybody at Rice. If he doesn't remember it, it didn't happen."

A witness to the first Rice commencement in 1916, Mr. Lovett described the pomp and circumstance that surrounded the robing before the academic procession formed. The mood was lightened by the antics of the five-year-old daughter of a physics professor, who, failing to recognize her father in his academic gown, ran breathlessly down the aisle to report to her mother, "Here comes the Lord Jesus."

"We began to laugh," Mr. Lovett recalled, "and even when the professors had gathered on the platform next to the Sallyport, we were still laughing. They were wondering what was so funny."

Elaine Illig Davis, president of the Fondren board, praised Mr. Lovett's service to the university, citing in particular gifts he and his late wife, Martha Wicks Lovett, made to the library. Among them were early editions of 15th- and 16th-



century plays by John Dryden, John Burgoyne, Samuel Foote, and John Vanbrigh, as well as a collection of Civil War letters from a New York volunteer, Charles Roberts, a member of Mrs. Lovett's family.

"It was through Mr. Lovett's initiative that the library's endowment fund was created," Mrs. Davis said. "It is now one of the largest in the university.

After graduating from Rice in 1921, Malcolm Lovett attended Harvard Law School and then joined the law firm of Baker & Botts in Houston. He served as Term Governor on the Rice Board from 1951 to 1962, as a Trustee from 1962 to 1972, and as chairman of the Board from 1967 to his retirement in 1972.

On behalf of the Board, he managed the lawsuit filed by Rice in 1962 to change the wording of the original trust indenture of the institute that restricted the student body to "white inhabitants of the city of Houston and the state of Texas" and that specified that Rice's education would be provided free to students. The historic case was eventually resolved in 1967, verifying the original intent of William Marsh Rice to establish "an institution of the first order." The action opened the school to all races and instituted tuition charges, and the university began its rise to national eminence. The Board on which he sat also voted on March 30, 1960, to change the name of the Institute to Rice University.

Joining Mr. Lovett to celebrate the family fealty to Rice were his daughters, Eliza Lovett Randall and Mary Hale Lovett McLean; his sons and daughters-in-law, H. Malcolm Lovett, Jr., and Mary Nell Lovett and Edgar Odell Lovett II and Pam Lovett; his grandchildren; family members; and friends too numerous to list.

Patrons for the Gala included Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Bucky Allshouse, Mr. and Mrs. Ben M. Anderson, Russell and Ryn Bowers, Greenwood King Properties, The Gulfstar Group, Inc., Lillian and Carl Illig, Elaine and Frank Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Earl L. Lester, Jr., Dr. and Mrs. John L. Margrave, Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Meyers, Stewart Morris, Jr., and the Stewart Title Co., Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Rogers III, Mr. and Mrs. Frank C. Shelden, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas D. Smith, and Mr. and Mrs. Garrett R. Tucker, Jr. Production of the film featuring Mr. Lovett was underwritten by Baker & Botts.

Proceeds from the Gala benefit the endowment fund for the Fondren Library. The Thirteenth Annual Fondren Saturday Night produced approximately ninety-three thousand dollars for the fund. The organizers for the event were Susan Merriman, Joan Ryan, and Roxanne Shaw.

The Friends of Fondren Library would like to thank everyone who helped to make the event successful.

## Friends To Form Great Books Club

by William Pannill

The Friends of Fondren will sponsor a Great Books Club open to any member. The organizational meeting will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 12, 1993, at 3709 Piping Rock Lane, Houston 77027 (telephone (713) 622-0846).

The club will operate under the auspices of the Great Books Foundation in Chicago. Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler of the University of Chicago helped to organize the Great Books Foundation in 1947.

Membership in a Great Books Club has no educational requirements, no teachers, and no tuition. Two discussion leaders--trained by the Foundation-- will guide the group.

Houston has a Great Books Council, with which the Fondren group will affiliate.

Rice had one of the first Great Books Clubs in the United States, founded in the fall of 1950 by Robert Rick and Elizabeth Rodell, the Rice librarian. Mr. Rick remains active in the Houston Great Books Council.

The Fondren group has tentatively selected the fifth series of Great Books to read. Books included are Ecclesiastes, Oedipus the King (Sophocles), On Dreams (Freud), The Metamorphosis (Kafka), Faust, part one (Goethe), First Principles of Morals (Kant), A Simple Heart (Flaubert), Of Personal Identity (Hume), Thus Spake Zarathustra (Nietzsche), The Inferno (Dante), Reflections on the Revolution in France (Burke), The Education of Henry Adams (H. Adams), King Lear (Shakespeare), on Tragedy (Aristotle), and The Republic (Plato).



Jan Domenico prepares to unload an auction item.

Elaine Illig Davis, Betty Cabaniss, and John Cabaniss at the Gala.



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## Begin Your Trip in the Reading Room

by Charles D. Maynard, Jr.

**H**ave you ever awakened on the second morning of an out-of-town trip and opened the local newspaper only to discover that you missed an event or performance the preceding day you would love to have attended? I recall just such a disappointment some years ago in Auckland, New Zealand. Having exerted considerable willpower to stave off sleep until the local bedtime the night before, I read an exciting newspaper account of a head-to-head competition between the two great kiwi milers, John Walker and Rod Dickson. This was occurring while I had been stumbling around in a daze at the Auckland Zoo. Not only would I have enjoyed the unique opportunity to see the two great runners on their home turf, but they also would have certainly made it easier to stay awake.

If you know the feeling, take heart. There is a way to avoid such disappointment. A week or so before departure, head for the periodical reading room on the first floor of the Fondren Library and consult a local newspaper from the corner of the world you intend to visit. Whether you are headed to London - for which you can consult the *Observer* containing "The Official London Theater Guide of the Society of Westend Theaters" and complete schedules for such institutions as Barbican Hall and the Royal Festival Hall, and the *Times* with a theater guide indicating not only times of performances and providing telephone numbers for ticket offices but also ticket availability, either "house full (returns only), some seats or all prices available", - or Beijing - from which the *China Daily*, published in English, provides complete listings of exhibits, films and performances, such as a concert of movie themes ranging from *2001: A Space Odyssey* to *Dances With Wolves* by the Central Philharmonic Society and an attempt by British stunt motorcyclist, Eddie Kidd, to leap the Great Wall Of China. Who could bear to miss that? Newspapers in the reading room will inform you and whet your appetite for local happenings.

Among others, the Fondren Library receives periodicals from such far-flung places as Nairobi, *The Daily Nation*, to Singapore, *The Straits Times* (International Edition), Rome, *La Repubblica*, to Buenos Aires, *La Nacion* (International Edition). From Paris, *Le Monde* brings you sections entitled *Culture* containing reviews of performances and exhibitions, and *Agenda* providing a complete listing for theater, conferences, cinema and exhibitions at such venues as the Pompidou Center.

Heading for Germany? Consult *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, which in addition to performances and exhibitions, contains Kunstmarkt, listing local antique and furniture dealers and even castles for sale, or *Rheinischer Merkur*, published in Bonn, which in its Sunday edition presents Kultur for "film, musik, kunst und theater". A passing knowledge of German is helpful. If you are looking for diversion while seeking new business opportunities in Eastern Europe, you might consult *The Prague Post*, an English-language weekly that offers a column entitled "Hot Tickets" in its Culture section, and *Night and Day*, with daily listings of performances and exhibits and advertisements for new restaurants and nightclubs. A recent edition sported a column entitled, "Where Can I Eat Breakfast in Prague?" And, yes, even if your travel plans will not take you outside of the good old U.S.A., you can still make yourself happy by consulting the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or the *Los Angeles Times*, if one of those happens to be at your destination.

Expect domestic papers to be current to a day or so but overseas publications may be several days in hitting the shelves. I am happy to report, however, that yesterday's news has been fresh enough on several occasions to alert me to events in places to which I was traveling that I have managed to attend but might otherwise have missed. Alas, when I last checked, the Auckland morning newspaper was not to be found at Fondren. So it goes. I will catch you in the next life, John and Rod.



## Friends Book Sale Nets Four Thousand Dollars

993



A browser searches for the right book.



A reader evaluates her haul.

by Karen Hess Rogers

The Friends of Fondren Library's book sale succeeded both in terms of funds raised and people involved. Fifty-five volunteers, including Friends of Fondren members and Rice students, worked throughout the year sorting, pricing, and selling more than 10,000 books.

Six hundred and sixteen people attended the sale on Saturday, April 24, in the Grand Hall of the Rice Memorial Center. The Friends realized \$4,400 from the event.

A large part of the success of the sale can be attributed to the exceptionally high quality of materials donated. There were collections of Texana, first editions, art books, an extensive selection of history books, encyclopedias, fictional works, and

reference materials. For the young collector, we even had baseball cards.

Rice students, faculty, members of the Friends, and community attended the event. In fact, the lure of the book sale proved too much for some guests at a wedding reception in the Farnsworth Pavilion next door. Tuxedos and fancy dresses started appearing in the early afternoon.

Next year's sale may include a preview for members only Friday night and a two-day sale on Saturday and Sunday.

I would like personally to thank all of our volunteers for their hard work. Our patrons commended us on our cheerful workers, who helped to make the sale a fun event.

**February 1, 1993 - April 30, 1993**

*We welcome the following new members.*

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*The Friends of Fondren Library are most grateful to these new Friends for their interest and to the Friends of longer standing for their support and for renewing their commitments.*

## **1994 Authors Reception Scheduled for January 19**

The Friends' Authors Reception for 1994 will occur Wednesday, January 19. The reception will honor members of the Friends, Rice alumni, faculty, and staff who had books published in 1993. If you know of a Rice-affiliated author published in 1993, please call the Friends office at 285-5157 or send information regarding author and book to:

The Friends of Fondren Library

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February 1, 1993 - April 30, 1993

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